

September 27, 2017

Honorable Members of the House of Representatives:

Michigan's agriculture industry urges you to support passage of HB 4999. This legislation positions our farmers to continue growing safe, affordable food. It also protects the state's economy by prohibiting local governments from imposing excise taxes on food manufacturing, distribution or sale, and codifying voter intent that a tax, by any name, should not be imposed on food.

Our farmers take pride in growing high-quality products. We lead the nation in the production of several crops, and Michigan's food and agriculture industry contributes more than \$101 billion annually to our state's economy, being second in product diversity only to California.

Some Michigan agriculture facts to note:

- Employment from this sector totals 923,000, which accounts for about 22 percent of the state's employment.
- In 2015, Michigan exported \$2.8 billion in food and agricultural products. Our top export markets are Canada, Japan, China, Thailand and Mexico.
- Our top agricultural exports are processed food products, soybeans & soybean meal, dairy products, feed & feed grains, and fresh & processed vegetables.
- There are approximately 10 million acres of farmland in Michigan, and the state is home to 52,194 farms.
- Exports help boost farm prices and income, while also supporting over 22,600 Michigan jobs, both on and off the farm, in food processing, storage, and transportation.
- Every \$1 in export activity generates another \$2.93 in economic activity, meaning Michigan's total agriculture exports of \$2.8 billion have a local impact of an additional \$8.2 billion.

We urge you to support HB 4999 so Michigan farmers have the best possible advantage in the marketplace and residents continue purchasing Michigan grown food.

Sincerely,

Carl Bednarski  
Michigan Farm Bureau

Matt Breslin  
Michigan Food Processors Association

Ray VanDriessche  
Michigan Sugar Company

David Williams and Gail Frahm  
Michigan Soybean Association

Maury Kaercher  
Michigan Sheep Producers Association

Val Vail-Shirey  
Michigan Greenhouse Growers Council

Amy Start  
Michigan Christmas Tree Association

Carl VanderKolk  
Michigan Cattleman's Association

Dawn Drake  
Michigan Processing Apple Growers

Mike Wenkel  
Potato Growers of Michigan

Dave Smith  
Michigan Vegetable Council

Ken Nobis  
Michigan Milk Producers Association

Dave Armstrong  
GreenStone Farm Credit Services